

Messrs. T. H. HARRISSON and A. J. MARSHALL sent the following description of a new species of *Aplonis* from the New Hebrides :—

During the period of 1933–34 when we were members of the Oxford University Expedition to the New Hebrides, considerable attention was paid to the misty, difficult-of-access, moss-forest regions, which usually began at an altitude of about 3000 feet. Here the matted rain-forest, so typical of tropical countries, gives way to a dripping world of mists and rotting vegetation, of scarlet “flame-trees,” tree-ferns, patches of tough *Pandanus*-palm, and, above all, a luxuriant flora of mosses, tree-creepers, and epiphytic orchids and pitcher-plants.

General accounts have already appeared in the ‘Geographical Journal,’ and a general study of the avifauna of these upland regions, as well as an exhaustive summary of lowland work, is in preparation.

***Aplonis santovestris*, sp. nov.**

Strikingly distinguishable from all other members of the genus by its rufous coloration and its altitudinal distribution and habits.

Description.—Female. Blackish head (with trace of brown); dark brown neck; dark rufous-brown back; dark rufous upper tail-coverts; primaries dark brown; secondaries and tertials dark brown with outer edges dark rufous; under wing-coverts paler; throat rufous, breast darker and richer rufous; under tail-coverts warm rufous; tail dark brown. Bill brownish-black with paler tip; gape yellowish; iris grey-green; fleshy parts brown.

Distribution.—Probably confined to the misty uplands of Santo. The bird was not collected by Harrison on either Omba or Malekula, where he later worked; neither was it seen on Gaua, in the Banks Group slightly north. It seems to have a parallel distribution to *Cichlornis whitneyi*, of which a series of specimens was obtained.

Type.—Female. In the British Museum. Collected on Mt. Watiamasan, N.W. Santo, 4000 feet, on May 25, 1934, by T. H. Harrison and A. J. Marshall. Brit. Mus. Reg. no. 1937.5.15.1.

Measurements of Type.—Wing 96 ; culmen 20 ; tail 55 ; tarsus 28 mm.

Remarks.—A gonad examination revealed the type to be in full breeding condition. It was collected in May 1934.

A male—possibly juvenile—in non-breeding condition is similar, except for a very slightly paler throat and a smaller size in general to the females. Collected in Mt. Tabwemasana (3800 feet) region, November 1933.

A third specimen, also collected on Mt. Watiamasan, is somewhat larger than the type, but its gonad condition was negative and possibly juvenile, and its bill was damaged by shot.

Average measurements for four specimens (one in spirit) are: wing 99 mm. ; tail 55.7 ; culmen 17.3 (3 specimens) ; tarsus 27.7.

So unlike is this bird to the rest of the genus *Aplonis* that a subsequent survey of the group may make it necessary to create a new genus or subgenus. *Aplonis* and its relatives as arranged by Sharpe must be considered very artificial ; the best arrangements seems to be those of Hartert and Stresemann. Dr. Ernst Mayr has recently discussed the limitations and generic characters of the genus *Aplonis* (Mitt. Zoolog. Museum Berlin, vol. ii. p. 335), and we are indebted to him for comparing our material with that in the Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.

Aplonis santovestris apparently most closely resembles *A. pelzelni* from Ponape, especially in bill and tarsus. It differs very considerably from *A. rufipennis* of the lowlands, which is a bird of the tree-tops and very scarce in the cloud-belt. The mountain bird is unobtrusive and solitary, and sub-terrestrial in that it is rarely observed higher than fifteen feet, and is completely at home among the rotting stumps and mossy lower foliage.

According to native information, *A. santovestris* nests in a hole of a tree close to the ground, and lays two white eggs. It is usually found singly or in pairs, never in flocks. The Tabwemasana people know it as "Mataweli." It lives on berries, fruits, and seeds. Calls heard were a thin hissing note and an unemotional harsh Thrush-like call. In the bush it sits silently on low boughs and stumps, flitting swiftly

away through the dripping foliage when disturbed. It is wholly a bird of the damp upland jungles; the natives say that "Mataweli" is afraid of the sun, and so never ventures into the sun-drenched lowlands.

Mr. G. L. BATES sent the following descriptions of two new races of Arabian birds:—

***Otus senegalensis pamelæ*, subsp. nov.**

Description.—Outermost remex about equal to the seventh. Length of wing in the three adult specimens: 147 mm. (type), 147 and 144 in the others, and 140 in one not quite adult. (The wing in *Otus senegalensis senegalensis* is usually well under 140 mm., and never over that.) The character of size is that most relied on; but the plumage of the Arabian specimen has a more dingy or earthy general appearance when compared with African, and the blackish shaft-streaks are not nearly so heavy and conspicuous in the Arabian as in the African. These remarks apply to juvenile Arabian specimens also when compared with African of the same age.

Type.—In the British Museum. Collected by H. St. J. B. Philby (no. 1224) at Dailami in Wadi Bisha, Arabia, May 26, 1936. Brit. Mus. Reg. no. 1937.4.17.1.

Remarks.—The first four specimens sent, an adult (the type) and three juveniles, have already been reported in the 'Bulletin' (lvii. p. 19). Four more have now been received, collected at Najran in the last days of June and the first days of July, 1936, of which only one is fully adult. But another adult specimen has been found in the British Museum, collected by Bury in the Amiri district north of Aden in 1901. As the Owl is the emblem of the Athenæum Club, of which Mr. Philby is a member, this new race has been named, at his suggestion, after Miss Pamela Lovibond, Librarian of the Athenæum.

***Chrysococcyx klaasi arabicus*, subsp. nov.**

Description.—Female differing from typical African *Chrysococcyx klaasi* in having dark outer rectrices, the outer webs of which have no light spots or only the slightest scarcely visible edge-spots, whereas in all specimens of *klaasi* from Africa,